source of income and a flexible schedule. In coming years, these workers will continue to transfer to other occupations or stop working to assume household responsibilities or to attend school full time, creating numerous openings for those entering the field.

These openings will be supplemented by new openings resulting from employment growth, as overall employment of chefs, cooks, and other kitchen workers is expected to increase about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2008. Employment growth will be spurred by increases in population, household income, and leisure time that will allow people to dine out and take vacations more often. In addition, growth in the number of two-income households will lead more families to opt for the convenience of dining out.

Projected employment growth varies by specialty. Increases in the number of families and the more affluent, 55-and-older population will lead to a growing number of restaurants that offer table service and more varied menus—requiring higher-skilled cooks and chefs. Also, the popularity of fresh baked breads and pastries should ensure continued rapid growth in the employment of bakers. Employment of short-order and specialty fast-food cooks, most of whom work in fast-food restaurants, also is expected to increase in response to growth of the 16-24 year-old population and the continuing fast-paced lifestyle of many Americans.

Employment of institutional and cafeteria chefs and cooks, on the other hand, will grow more slowly than other types of cooks. Their employment will not keep pace with the rapid growth in the educational and health services industries—where their employment is concentrated. As many high schools and hospitals try to make "institutional food" more attractive to students, staff, visitors, and patients, they increasingly contract out their food services. Many of the contracted companies emphasize fast food and employ short-order and fast-food cooks, instead of institutional and cafeteria cooks, reducing the demand for these workers.

Earnings

Wages of chefs, cooks, and other kitchen workers depend greatly on the part of the country and the type of establishment in which they are employed. Wages usually are highest in elegant restaurants and hotels, where many executive chefs are employed.

Median hourly earnings of restaurant cooks were $7.81 in 1998, with most earning between $6.38 and $9.53. Cooks in fast-food restaurants and short order cooks had median hourly earnings of $6.12, with most earning between $5.69 and $7.38. Median hourly earnings of bread and pastry bakers were $8.17; most earned between $6.57 and $10.36. Median hourly earnings in the industries employing the largest number of food preparation workers in 1997 were:

Hospitals	$7.55
Grocery stores	7.21
Elementary and secondary schools	7.16
Nursing and personal care facilities	6.92
Eating and drinking places	5.87

Some employers provide employees with uniforms and free meals, but Federal law permits employers to deduct from their employees' wages the cost or fair value of any meals or lodging provided, and some employers do so. Chefs, cooks, and other kitchen workers who work full time often receive typical benefits, but part-time workers usually do not.

In some large hotels and restaurants, kitchen workers belong to unions. The principal unions are the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union and the Service Employees International Union.

Related Occupations

Workers who perform tasks similar to those of chefs, cooks, and other kitchen workers include butchers and meat cutters, cannery workers, and industrial bakers.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about job opportunities may be obtained from local employers and local offices of the State employment service.

Career information about chefs, cooks, and other kitchen workers, as well as a directory of 2- and 4-year colleges that offer courses or programs that prepare persons for food service careers, is available from:

☛ The National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th St. NW., Washington, DC 20036-3097.

For information on the American Culinary Federation's apprenticeship and certification programs for cooks, as well as a list of accredited culinary programs, send a self addressed, stamped envelope to:

☛ American Culinary Federation, P.O. Box 3466, St. Augustine, FL 32085.

For general information on hospitality careers, write to:

☛ Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education, 1200 17th St. NW., Washington, DC 20036-3097.

Food and Beverage Service Occupations

(O*NET 65002, 65005, 65008A, 65008B, 65011, 65014, 65017, 65041, 65099A, and 65099B)

Significant Points

- Most jobs are part time and many opportunities exist for young people—nearly 2 out of 3 food counter and fountain workers are 16-19 years old.
- Job openings are expected to be abundant through 2008, reflecting substantial turnover.
- Tips comprise a major portion of earnings; consequently, keen competition is expected for bartender, waiter and waitress, and other jobs in popular restaurants and fine dining establishments where potential earnings from tips are greatest.

Nature of the Work

Whether they work in small, informal diners or large, elegant restaurants, all food and beverage service workers aim to help customers have a positive dining experience in their establishments. These workers are responsible for greeting customers, taking food and drink orders, serving food, cleaning up after patrons, and preparing tables and dining areas. All of these duties require a high quality of services customers will return.

The largest group of these workers, *waiters* and *waitresses,* take customers' orders, serve food and beverages, prepare itemized checks, and sometimes accept payments. Their specific duties vary considerably, depending on the establishment where they work. In coffee shops, they are expected to provide fast and efficient, yet courteous service. In fine restaurants, where gourmet meals are accompanied by attentive formal service, waiters and waitresses serve meals at a more leisurely pace and offer more personal service to patrons. For example, servers may recommend a certain wine as a complement to a particular entree, explain how various items on the menu are prepared, or complete preparations on a salad or other special dishes at table side. Additionally, waiters and waitresses may check the identification of patrons to ensure they meet the minimum age requirement for the purchase of alcohol and tobacco products.

Depending on the type of restaurant, waiters and waitresses may perform additional duties usually associated with other food and beverage service occupations. These tasks may include escorting guests to tables, serving customers seated at counters, setting up and clearing tables, or operating a cash register. However, formal restaurants frequently hire other staff to perform these duties, allowing their waiters and waitresses to concentrate on customer service.

Bartenders fill drink orders that waiters and waitresses take from customers. They prepare standard mixed drinks and, occasionally, are asked to mix drinks to suit a customer's taste. Most bartenders know dozens of drink recipes and are able to mix drinks accurately, quickly, and without waste, even during the busiest periods. Besides mixing and serving drinks, bartenders collect payment, operate the cash register, clean up after customers leave, and often serve food to

customers seated at the bar. Bartenders also check identification of customers seated at the bar, to ensure they meet the minimum age requirement for the purchase of alcohol and tobacco products. Bartenders usually are responsible for ordering and maintaining an inventory of liquor, mixes, and other bar supplies. They often form attractive displays out of bottles and glassware and wash the glassware and utensils after each use.

The majority of bartenders who work in eating and drinking establishments directly serve and interact with patrons. Because customers typically frequent drinking establishments for the friendly atmosphere, most bartenders must be friendly and helpful with customers. Bartenders at service bars, on the other hand, have little contact with customers because they work in small bars in restaurants, hotels, and clubs where only waiters and waitresses serve drinks. Some establishments, especially larger ones, use automatic equipment to mix drinks of varying complexity at the push of a button. Even in these establishments, however, bartenders still must be efficient and knowledgeable in case the device malfunctions or a customer requests a drink not handled by the equipment.

Hosts and *hostesses* try to create a good impression of a restaurant by warmly welcoming guests. Because hosts and hostesses are restaurants' personal representatives, they try to insure that service is prompt and courteous and that the meal meets expectations. They may courteously direct patrons to where coats and other personal items may be left and indicate where patrons can wait until their table is ready. Hosts and hostesses assign guests to tables suitable for the size of their group, escort patrons to their seats, and provide menus. They also schedule dining reservations, arrange parties, and organize any special services that are required. In some restaurants, they also act as cashiers.

Dining room attendants and *bartender helpers* assist waiters, waitresses, and bartenders by cleaning tables, removing dirty dishes, and keeping serving areas stocked with supplies. They replenish the supply of clean linens, dishes, silverware, and glasses in the dining room and keep the bar stocked with glasses, liquor, ice, and drink garnishes. Bartender helpers also keep bar equipment clean and wash glasses. Dining room attendants set tables with clean tablecloths, napkins, silverware, glasses, and dishes and serve ice water, rolls, and butter. At the conclusion of meals, they remove dirty dishes and soiled linens from tables. Cafeteria attendants stock serving tables with food, trays, dishes, and silverware and may carry trays to dining tables for patrons.

Counter attendants take orders and serve food at counters. In cafeterias, they serve food displayed on counters and steam tables, carve meat, dish out vegetables, ladle sauces and soups, and fill beverage glasses. In lunchrooms and coffee shops, counter attendants take orders from customers seated at the counter, transmit orders to the kitchen, and pick up and serve food. They also fill cups with coffee, soda, and other beverages and prepare fountain specialties, such as milkshakes and ice cream sundaes. Counter attendants prepare some short-order items, such as sandwiches and salads, and wrap or place orders in containers for carry out. They also clean counters, write itemized checks, and sometimes accept payment.

Fast-food workers take orders from customers at counters or drive-through windows at fast-food restaurants. They pick up the ordered beverage and food items, serve them to a customer, and accept payment. Many fast-food workers also cook and package food, make coffee, and fill beverage cups using drink-dispensing machines.

Working Conditions

Food and beverage service workers are on their feet most of the time and often carry heavy trays of food, dishes, and glassware. During busy dining periods, they are under pressure to serve customers quickly and efficiently. The work is relatively safe, but care must be taken to avoid slips, falls, and burns.

Part-time work is more common among food and beverage service workers than among workers in almost any other occupation. Those on part-time schedules include half of all waiters and waitresses, and 6 out of 10 food counter and fountain workers, compared to 1 out of 6 workers throughout the economy. Slightly more than half of all bartenders work full-time with 35 percent working part-time and the remainder working a variable schedule.

Part-time work is more common among food and beverage service workers than among workers in almost any other occupation.

The wide range in dining hours creates work opportunities attractive to homemakers, students, and other individuals seeking supplemental income. In fact, nearly 2 out of 3 food counter and fountain workers are between 16 and 19 years old. Many food and beverage service workers work evenings, weekends, and holidays. Some work split shifts—that is, they work for several hours during the middle of the day, take a few hours off in the afternoon, and then return to their jobs for evening hours.

Employment

Food and beverage service workers held over 5.4 million jobs in 1998. Waiters and waitresses held about 2,019,000 of these jobs; counter attendants and fast-food workers, 2,025,000; dining room and cafeteria attendants and bartender helpers, 405,000; bartenders, 404,000; hosts and hostesses, 297,000; and all other food preparation and service workers, 280,000.

Restaurants, coffee shops, bars, and other retail eating and drinking places employed the overwhelming majority of food and beverage service workers. Others worked in hotels and other lodging places, bowling alleys, casinos, country clubs, and other membership organizations.

Jobs are located throughout the country but are typically plentiful in large cities and tourist areas. Vacation resorts offer seasonal employment, and some workers alternate between summer and winter resorts, instead of remaining in one area the entire year.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

There are no specific educational requirements for food and beverage service jobs. Although many employers prefer to hire high school graduates for waiter and waitress, bartender, and host and hostess positions, completion of high school is usually not required for fast-food workers, counter attendants, and dining room attendants and bartender helpers. For many people, a job as a food and beverage service worker serves as a source of immediate income, rather than a career. Many entrants to these jobs are in their late teens or early twenties and have a high school education or less. Usually, they have little or no work experience. Many are full-time students or homemakers. Food and beverage service jobs are a major source of part-time employment for high school and college students.

Because maintaining a restaurant's image is important to its success, employers emphasize personal qualities. Food and beverage service workers are in close contact with the public, so these workers should be well-spoken and have a neat, clean appearance. They should enjoy dealing with all kinds of people and possess a pleasant disposition.

Waiters and waitresses need a good memory to avoid confusing customers' orders and to recall faces, names, and preferences of

frequent patrons. These workers should also be good at arithmetic so they can total bills without the assistance of a calculator or cash register if necessary. In restaurants specializing in foreign foods, knowledge of a foreign language is helpful. Prior experience waiting on tables is preferred by restaurants and hotels that have rigid table service standards. Jobs at these establishments often have higher earnings, but they may also have higher educational requirements than less demanding establishments.

Usually, bartenders must be at least 21 years of age, but employers prefer to hire people who are 25 or older. Bartenders should be familiar with State and local laws concerning the sale of alcoholic beverages.

Most food and beverage service workers pick up their skills on the job by observing and working with more experienced workers. Some employers, particularly those in fast-food restaurants, use self-instruction programs with audiovisual presentations and instructional booklets to teach new employees food preparation and service skills. Some public and private vocational schools, restaurant associations, and large restaurant chains provide classroom training in a generalized food service curriculum.

Some bartenders acquire their skills by attending a bartending or vocational and technical school. These programs often include instruction on State and local laws and regulations, cocktail recipes, attire and conduct, and stocking a bar. Some of these schools help their graduates find jobs.

Due to the relatively small size of most food-serving establishments, opportunities for promotion are limited. After gaining some experience, some dining room and cafeteria attendants and bartender helpers are able to advance to waiter, waitress, or bartender jobs. For waiters, waitresses, and bartenders, advancement usually is limited to finding a job in a more expensive restaurant or bar where prospects for tip earnings are better. A few bartenders open their own businesses. Some hosts and hostesses and waiters and waitresses advance to supervisory jobs, such as maitre d'hotel, dining room supervisor, or restaurant manager. In larger restaurant chains, food and beverage service workers who excel at their work are often invited to enter the company's formal management training program. (For more information, see the *Handbook* statement on restaurant and food service managers.)

Job Outlook

Job openings are expected to be abundant for food and beverage service workers. Employment of food and beverage service occupations is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2008, stemming from increases in population, personal incomes, and leisure time. While employment growth will produce many new jobs, the overwhelming majority of openings will arise from the need to replace the high proportion of workers who leave this occupation each year. There is substantial movement into and out of the occupation because education and training requirements are minimal, and the predominance of part-time jobs is attractive to people seeking a short-term source of income rather than a career. However, keen competition is expected for bartender, waiter and waitress, and other food and beverage service jobs in popular restaurants and fine dining establishments, where potential earnings from tips are greatest.

Projected employment growth will vary by type of food and beverage service job. Growth in the number of families and the more affluent, 55-and-older population will result in more restaurants that offer table service and more varied menus—requiring waiters and waitresses and hosts and hostesses. Employment of fast-food workers also is expected to increase in response to the continuing fast-paced lifestyle of many Americans and the addition of healthier foods at many of these restaurants. However, little change is expected in the employment of dining room attendants, as waiters and waitresses increasingly assume their duties. Employment of bartenders is expected to decline as drinking of alcoholic beverages outside the home—particularly cocktails—continues to drop.

Earnings

Food and beverage service workers derive their earnings from a combination of hourly wages and customer tips. Earnings vary greatly, depending on the type of job and establishment. For example, fast-food workers and hosts and hostesses usually do not receive tips, so their wage rates may be higher than those of waiters and waitresses and bartenders, who may earn more from tips than from wages. In some restaurants, these workers contribute a portion of their tips to a tip pool, which is distributed among the establishment's other food and beverage service workers and kitchen staff. Tip pools allow workers who normally do not receive tips, such as dining room attendants, to share in the rewards of a well-served meal.

In 1998, median hourly earnings (not including tips) of full-time waiters and waitresses were $5.85. The middle 50 percent earned between $5.58 and $6.32; the top 10 percent earned at least $7.83. For most waiters and waitresses, higher earnings are primarily the result of receiving more in tips rather than higher hourly wages. Tips usually average between 10 and 20 percent of guests' checks, so waiters and waitresses working in busy, expensive restaurants earn the most.

Full-time bartenders had median hourly earnings (not including tips) of $6.25 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned from $5.72 and $7.71; the top 10 percent earned at least $9.19 an hour. Like waiters and waitresses, bartenders employed in public bars may receive more than half of their earnings as tips. Service bartenders are often paid higher hourly wages to offset their lower tip earnings.

Median weekly hourly earnings (not including tips) of full-time dining room attendants and bartender helpers were $6.03 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between $5.67 and $7.11; the top 10 percent earned over $8.49 an hour. Most received over half of their earnings as wages; the rest of their income was a share of the proceeds from tip pools.

Full-time counter attendants and fast-food workers, except cooks, had median hourly earnings (not including tips) of $6.06 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between $5.67 and $7.14, while the highest 10 percent earned over $8.45 a hour. Although some counter attendants receive part of their earnings as tips, fast-food workers usually do not.

In establishments covered by Federal law, most workers beginning at the minimum wage earned $5.15 an hour in 1998. However, various minimum wage exceptions apply under specific circumstances to disabled workers, full-time students, youth under age 20 in their first 90 days of employment, tipped employees, and student-learners. Employers are also permitted to deduct from wages the cost, or fair value, of any meals or lodging provided. However, many employers provide free meals and furnish uniforms. Food and beverage service workers who work full time often receive typical benefits, while part-time workers usually do not.

In some large restaurants and hotels, food and beverage service workers belong to unions—principally the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union and the Service Employees International Union.

Related Occupations

Other workers whose jobs involve serving customers and helping them enjoy themselves include flight attendants, butlers, and tour bus drivers.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about job opportunities may be obtained from local employers and local offices of the State employment service.

A guide to careers in restaurants, a list of 2- and 4-year colleges that have food service programs, and information on scholarships to those programs is available from:

☛ National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th St. NW., Washington, DC 20036-3097.

For general information on hospitality careers, write to:

☛ Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education, 1200 17th St. NW., Washington, DC 20036-3097.